

SENATE BILL REPORT

E2SHB 1422

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Human Services & Corrections, March 23, 2007

Title: An act relating to children and families of incarcerated parents.

Brief Description: Addressing children and families of incarcerated parents.

Sponsors: House Committee on Appropriations (originally sponsored by Representatives Roberts, Dickerson, Appleton, Walsh, Haler, Darneille, Lovick, Pettigrew, Quall, Hasegawa, Sells, Goodman, Eddy, Green, O'Brien, Chase, Kagi, Ormsby and Santos).

Brief History: Passed House: 3/09/07, 86-11.

Committee Activity: Human Services & Corrections: 3/23/07 [DPA].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES & CORRECTIONS

Majority Report: Do pass as amended.

Signed by Senators Hargrove, Chair; Regala, Vice Chair; Stevens, Ranking Minority Member; Brandland, Carrell and McAuliffe.

Staff: Kiki Keizer (786-7430)

Background: 2005 legislation required the Department of Corrections (DOC) and the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) to collaborate in establishing an oversight committee to develop an interagency plan to provide services and supports to Washington children whose parents are in jail or prison.

The oversight committee completed its final report June 30, 2006.

Summary of Engrossed Second Substitute Bill: The Secretaries of the DOC and the DSHS, the Director of the Department of Early Learning, and the Superintendent of Public Instruction must all review their agencies' policies and assess the adequacy and availability of programs for children and families with a family member in jail or prison.

The Department of Community, Trade, and Economic Development must establish an advisory committee to monitor, guide, and report on recommendations related to policies and programs for children and families with incarcerated parents.

If specific funding is not provided in the budget to implement the act, then the act is null and void.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

EFFECT OF CHANGES MADE BY RECOMMENDED AMENDMENT(S) AS PASSED COMMITTEE (Human Services & Corrections): Eliminates the requirement that DOC programs focus on "normal childhood development."

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: The changes in the bill were to address fiscal concerns raised by the agencies affected. The important thing is to focus on the policy of working with the statistically significant and invisible population of children of incarcerated parents. The bill represents in the ultimate in preventing a new generation of persons from ending up in prison. The House budget includes \$600,000 to fund this endeavor, which is a good start at fostering the collaboration and awareness of resources available in agencies for this group.

The DOC offers many family-centered programs. However, the DOC urges an amendment allowing it to focus on reducing recidivism and intergenerational incarceration, rather than addressing child development issues, which are not within its area of expertise.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Representative Roberts, prime sponsor; Joenne Harray, DOC; Kathleen Russell, Pacific Lutheran University, Social Work Program; Cathy Garland, Children's Home Society of Washington.